

Hello Members,

Firstly, thanks to those of you who took the time to send in articles/photos for this newsletter. Special thanks to Sally Rae for her items reprinted with permission from the Otago Daily Times, without these this issue would be small indeed!

I have been very disappointed in the poor response from the feature breed for this issue. It may be that they currently are doing so well they don't need to have any more info "out there" but remember this newsletter goes to all members and features on the Association website. While many of those who browse the site may never buy a sheep or even be meat eaters they do often buy woollen garments whether everyday or high end fashion. It is definitely a missed opportunity to publicise the ways in which Merino wool is utilised both here and overseas.

There is an old adage that there is no such thing as bad publicity. While I do not subscribe to this theory I do believe that one can't have too much good publicity. This is free exposure for YOU.

The forward thinking Texel breeders have already booked the Feature Breed space for the September issue so I am looking forward to a tremendous amount of info and photos from them.

I had the good fortune to attend the Golden Shears in Masterton with a group of American and Canadian visitors who were being hosted by our Friendship Force Wairarapa club. They enjoyed the excitement of the audience as the last sheep or two were being shorn in each final. They were also surprised when the one who came first in the Open was relegated to last once the quality points were assessed. Merinos were shorn in a couple of the events.

Please note that I will be away overseas the last day or two of May and all of June, therefore the **deadline for the next (June) newsletter has been brought forward to 1st May**. The feature breed will be Shropshires as I know I can get their material on time!

Any breed can submit items for the newsletter at any time. While we do have a feature breed this does not mean that only items for that breed can be submitted.

Helen McKenzie
Editor

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ASSOCIATION NEWS & VIEWS

From The President



It has been a summer that you would want to forget here in the south with constant winds and only five days in January without rain and it wasn't much better for the beginning of February. The last few days have been lovely and warm so we hopefully will get an extended autumn. The only bright patch - the blue cod and groper are getting bigger as the recreational fishermen can't get out to sea to catch them!

It seems that generally ram sales have been firm, particularly terminal sires, probably brought about by the poor price of wool which is very disappointing. Gore Stud fair had a bright spot with two Suffolk rams selling for \$10,500 and \$9,000. Pity there weren't more sales of this nature at the stud sales.

We had a small scale meeting on the Friday of the Christchurch A & P show amongst a group of breeders concerned about the direction of SIL and comments from Beef & Lamb advising who to buy their rams from. It was decided by some breeders to send Beef & Lamb a letter of concern about these matters.

Beef & Lamb have acknowledged they have received the letter and were going to discuss the concerns. I have not had any communication, but maybe someone else has?

All the best for 2017.

Jim Berney
President NZSBA



From The General Manager

Already in March - so true that as we progress through life, time seems to progress ever faster.

At this stage in the year in parts of the country members are still selling rams, and I have heard mixed reports from members.

Some areas where rams have sold well may be demand/supply, as with some ram breeders now no longer around the supply is limited resulting in those members selling all their rams. I have also heard there has been a shift

away from some mixed breeds to purebreds. Seems to differ from region to region.....just like the weather!

For those breeds having conferences I urge those members to participate, as they are always rewarding; viewing and comparing stock, visiting places you that you wouldn't normally take the time to visit, and the camaraderie is just so important.

Breeds having conferences this year are Poll Dorset, Dorset Down, South Suffolk, Texel, and Dorpers.

Breed Committees are organising meetings to review the previous year, if they advertise, assessing and planning for this year. Any concerns/suggestions please contact your breed committee by contacting the office before they meet.

Expect your Annual Returns later this month

The NZ Ewe Hogget Competition is again happening in its 21st year with entries closing North Island – 10 April; South Island – 21 April. You will receive enormous profile and publicity if you win/or if you are a supplier of rams to the winning property. Enter now or get your clients to enter.

Entry form on www.nzsheep.co.nz

Good photos of your sheep, and articles, are needed for the newsletter to be viable. If your breed is to be featured please get behind the feature and put in an advertisement (free) for your stud and/or a story. We take classified ads too – ewes for sale etc.

If you've got a sale or dispersal coming up let the Editor know so it can be featured. Next issue will be out in June. Please don't leave info gathering til the last minute as there is an **early** June publishing date!

Greg Burgess

General Manager, NZSBA



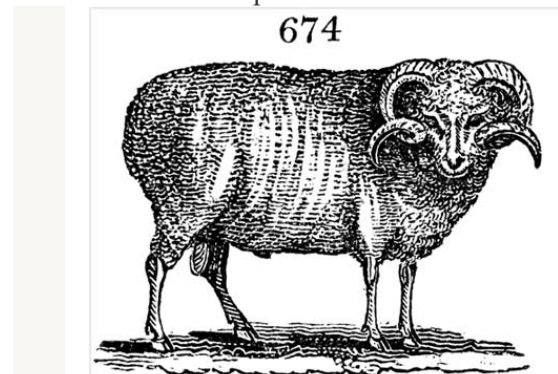
Feature Breeds



MERINO, POLL MERINO & HALFBRED SHEEP

Brief History MERINOS

The Spanish or Merino ram



This image of a Spanish Merino is from Loudon's Encyclopedia of Agriculture, published in 1825.

The Spanish Merino, which became the base breed of modern Merino sheep, was founded on sheep brought into Spain from North Africa by the Beni-Merines, (after which the Merino was named) a Berber people who migrated to Spain in the mid 12th century.

For many decades Spain banned the export of Merinos in order to retain a monopoly on the fine wool they produced.

About the middle of the 18th century the King of Spain presented three hundred Merino sheep to his relative, Prince Xavier, Elector of Saxony. A stud was formed and carefully selected for wool quality. Further sheep were added from Spain over time. From here came the origin of the Saxon Merino breed. It was thought that the fineness of the Merino wool at this time (from fabric samples of known origin) was between 21 & 24 microns.

Eventually the Merino arrived in the UK. King George III established a flock.

A few Merinos derived from Spanish Escorial stock were taken to South Africa in 1785. Some descendants of these sheep were taken to Australia to become the first Merinos into Australia.

Genetics from both the flock of King George III and the Saxony flock were imported to Australia after this and really became the foundation stock of the modern Merino strains in Australia. The Australian Merino wool staple was longer than that previously available for spinning with the modern machinery and a good trade with the English mills was quickly established.

Today there are three main Australian strains of Merinos – the Peppin, the South Australian and the fine wool Saxon.

There are now many different strains of Merino throughout the world in countries too numerous to mention. The Merino has contributed genetically to the American Rambouillet; the Comeback (Aus); Corriedale (NZ); NZ Halfbred and the Australian Polwarth.

Merinos arrived in NZ with Samuel Marsden in 1814. He had been breeding them successfully in New South Wales and was awarded this silver jug by the Agricultural Society of New South Wales in 1825. By 1835 he was exporting NZ Merino wool to England.



Eventually Merinos found their niche in the “high country” of the South Island where they prosper to this day. Although a few are found in other areas of NZ, the drier, colder climate and sparser feed suit the production of the ‘high end’ wool products they are now internationally renowned for. There is currently only one registered flock in the North Island with a few in Marlborough and the remainder in Canterbury and Otago.

Below: *This modern Merino ram was the Supreme Champion Merino and the All Breeds Wool Champion at the 2017 Canterbury Show*



Photo: I W McCall

POLL MERINOS

The first known antipodean polled Merino was a ram imported into Australia with some Saxon ewes from Germany in 1825. The first specifically Poll Merino stud was founded in Australia in the 1880's.

Polled Merinos allow for easier and safer handling of the sheep as neither rams nor ewes have horns. Wethers from polled stock do not grow horns after castration. This is important as Merino breeders often run wether flocks for their wool as they are not subject to the tenderness wool often gets when ewes carry and rear a lamb.

NZ's oldest registered flock of Poll Merinos is that of W H Gibson, “Malvern Downs”. It was registered with NZSBA in 1950 and remains in the flock book to this day.



Poll Merino ram

Photo: S Paterson

HALFBRED

This breed was developed in the 19th century from the Merino crossed with a longwool breed eg English Leicester, Romney or Lincoln. The Halfbred is more fertile and has more meat than the straight Merino. It is found mainly in the foothills of the Southern Alps.



Halfbred sheep

Photo: I Stevenson

“Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry.”

WOOLLY THINKING IN NORWAY

by Sally Rae Photos by Simon McIntosh from the Otago Daily Times April 19th, 2016 (Reprinted with permission)



Cathrine Stange, CEO of Devold

At first glance, the similarities between a Norwegian clothing company and a Gimmerburn farm might appear remote.

But with both enterprises sharing a strong focus on quality and a passion for wool - along with histories spanning more than a century - there were definite synergies.

Three executives from high-performance wool clothing brand Devold, including chief executive Cathrine Stange, recently visited the Paterson family's property Armidale in the Maniototo.

Meeting Allan and Simon Paterson, along with other merino growers, during a visit to Otago, was an opportunity to see at first hand how the value chain worked, as part of the company's "sheep to shop" strategy.



Left: Simon Paterson

"We're deeply passionate about what we do. To meet with these guys, who are equally passionate about what they do ... we share the same values and philosophy on how things should be done when it comes to animal welfare, sustainability, quality and consistency," Ms Stange said.

It was her first visit to New

Zealand although she was previously aware of the country's farming reputation. But meeting growers on-farm was important, she said.

"That's when you really can connect and really understand the passion they have."

Father and son Allan and Simon Paterson, with their respective wives Eris and Sarah, were the fourth and fifth generations to farm Armidale, which has been in the family since the 1880s.

Like Devold, they had "been around a long time" and everything they did was about ensuring it was there for a long time to come, Simon said, while his father added they were passionate about producing good wool.

PGG Wrightson Wool business development manager Craig Smith said the Paterson family were "all about quality".

"It's great to see passionate farmers here. These guys [Devold] are extremely passionate about their part of the pipeline, that's making fabric.

"When the two ends start talking together, Norway and the Maniototo ... this is what we want. It's great both philosophies align with each other straight away," Mr Smith said.

A lot of the wool going into Devold contracts had Armidale bloodlines which also gave more evenness.

Devold was using about eight to 12 tonnes of yarn each week, although not all the wool for that yarn would be sourced from New Zealand.

"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."

The company dated back to 1853, when its founder came up with the idea of knitting wool sweaters for fishermen.

It has continued to work with wool and its core strength is now in base layer merino clothing. It also manufactures mid-layer clothing, along with socks and accessories, and has an ambition to move into outer layers.

The fishermen's sweaters, from which the business had its origins, remained in its collection and were becoming increasingly popular.

Devold was a market leader in Norway and also sold internationally and its focus was on "premium quality", Ms Stange said.

To do that, it needed to own its own manufacturing and have control of the whole supply chain, so it had a spinning plant in Lithuania.

It was pursuing a "sheep to shop" strategy and it wanted to be able to trace the wool "all the way back to the sheep".

It needed farmers who understood the company's values and philosophy, which included animal welfare, no mulesing and a "clean and green" image.

As part of establishing that transparency, it was very important and logical to talk to merino growers, she said.

Devold believed there were opportunities in making sure its customers knew about the process, not just it as a company. Consumers in the European market were focused on sustainability and quality.

The merino base layer market segment was being "flooded" and Devold needed to differentiate itself.

It was about high quality, rather than "generic cheap merino" and it was getting good traction in the marketplace with innovative new products.

"We believe merino wool can be used for so many things ... we have to educate consumers about that," she said.

While there had been a focus on quality in the business "forever", it was becoming more apparent there was a need to tell the consumer about the quality that went into their product.

That was now the big opportunity and the visit was being filmed with the intention of using the footage to show everything the trio saw, from sheep to the landscape. The target group to view it was primarily the company's retail partners.

Ms Stange hoped to eventually share information about the properties where the wool was sourced on a label on the garments.

Devold, which wanted to source 17.5 and 18.5 micron wool from New Zealand, was looking to establish long-term partnerships.

It was "not about shopping around", Ms Stange said.

She took on the role in 2014 and the more she learned about and understood everything that went into make the products, the more excited she got.

"There's a lot of history and responsibility but, I think, by having this very clearly crafted strategy about what we're all about, what we're going to do and how to go about it, it makes it fantastic and fun," she said.



NZ MERINO STUD BREEDERS' SOCIETY

The Society exists to ensure a united stud industry through collaborative work within the Regional Stud Breeders' Associations. The Society and Regional Stud Breeders' Associations undertake:

- Merino sheep selection workshops
- Merino stud tours
- Field days for new Merino growers
- Merino management field days
- Industry representation on animal health and welfare
- Promotion of sheep sales
- Dissemination of industry news and market information with newsletters
- Research and promotion of Merino meat
- Elimination of contamination in wool
- Improving wool packaging standards
- Introducing quality management systems to meet processor requirements
- Organising competitions to promote and reward higher standards in Merino Sheep breeding management and presentation

A Bit of History

RAMS FOR SALE EX STEAM SHIP LORD ASHLEY

Lyttelton Times 30 April 1859
[National Library, *Papers Past*]

The undersigned is instructed to sell by private contract, in lots to suit purchasers, 104 RAMS, imported by C Sidey, Esq., of Bathurst.

The above are the progeny of pure merino stock, imported direct from Germany, and are now on view at the paddocks of the undersigned at Stanmore.

JOHN T. PARKINSON

P.S. – the above rams having been bred on the Highlands of Australia, and never having been diseased, will be found peculiarly applicable for the New Zealand climate.

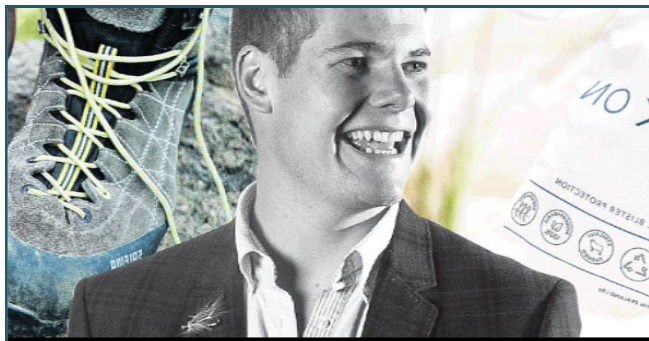
THIS WOOL WAS MADE FOR WALKING

(Reprinted with permission.)

Otago Daily Times of Feb 27, 2017

By SALLY RAE

PHOTO SUPPLIED



'A trip of a lifetime was just crushed by something so simple. How pathetic is that? That really fired me up to do something about it', Walk On founder Lucas Smith.

LUCAS SMITH may have been the worst shepherd ever to set foot on Simons Hill Station but the experience proved life changing.

'A trip of a lifetime was just crushed by something so simple. How pathetic is that? That really fired me up to do something about it'

The young entrepreneur is now at the helm of a footcare business, using merino wool, that has plans to expand into the United States, Canada and possibly Australia in the next year.

Walk On was designed as a natural, biodegradable product to prevent blisters and "make foot care glamorous again". Mr Smith's aim is to be the leading performance footcare business in the world, supporting "locals" and increasing returns to farmers, through taking a New Zealand made product to the international market.

Not that the former mountain guide, with infectious energy, ever dreamed he would be "looking after people's feet at 21".

Originally from Timaru, Mr Smith said it became apparent when he left school that his parents were not going to pay for his tertiary studies.

On a quest to pay his own way, he ended up at Simons Hill Station, between Tekapo and Twizel, over the summer of 2013.

He demonstrated loads of enthusiasm but limited expertise in the farming field and candidly admits he was probably the "worst shepherd they had ever had".

But from farmers Glenn and Sarah Fastier, he learned about sustainable farming and that was where his passion for the merino industry started.

From there, he headed to Victoria University in Wellington to study political science and anthropology.

Having dyslexia meant his learning was "not possibly as good as it could be in the traditional sense" and he was getting distracted.

He kept thinking back to his time at Simons Hill and how it was a shame that the "incredible job" that Mr and Mrs Fastier were doing could not be shown to the wider public.

So he left university to build a software company with the aim of allowing consumers to trace their food.

It was a "terrible" business model, he recalled, although he did learn some valuable lessons from it.

To recoup himself, Mr Smith headed to the hills and became a mountain guide on the Routeburn and Milford tracks.

About halfway through the first season guiding, he realised he was sick of dealing with people's feet, especially infected feet. "The problem was it really cut me up," he said.

People were coming from all over the world and all walks of life to walk the tracks. Many had saved up their money for years or were marking a special occasion.

But after arriving with a pair of new hiking boots in an "incredible part of the world", all they would be thinking about was their feet, potentially ruining the experience.

That frustrated Mr Smith, particularly when he saw several people evacuated due to infected blisters.

He got thinking about why petrochemical pads were being used for blister prevention and protection.

The final straw came on the Mackinnon Pass, the highest point on the Milford Track, when he was walking with an American woman who had saved for the trip for about six years.

Her feet had been "torn to shreds" by petrochemical pads and she was incapable of walking anywhere. He had to call a helicopter to fly her out.

"A trip of a lifetime was just crushed by something so simple. How pathetic is that? That really fired me up to do something about it," he said.

He thought there must be a better way to make an environmentally friendly blister protection and prevention product that worked. He started doing some "serious homework" and his research led him to the Alexander

"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."

Turnbull Library in Wellington, where he discovered that such a method was used by Anzac soldiers in the trenches during World War 1. Mr Smith left guiding behind in April last year and started Walk On from a cold, draughty garage in Christchurch in May.

Since then, the business had “grown in leaps and bounds”, moving out of the garage and to offices in the central city. Torpedo7 was Walk On’s main retail distribution partner and the business was eyeing international expansion.

He had been in talks with some large retailers in the US and Canada. People often asked how he got those connections. The answer was simple — he rang them until they picked up the phone, he said.

The business was designed to be sustainable at scale. The larger it could grow, the more it could be sustainable, the more wool it could buy, and subsequently the more that could be paid for it, giving farmers more money to ensure they were more sustainable.

Walk On products were packaged in Christchurch by Kilmarnock Enterprises, which employed people with disabilities. It was an honour to support such a venture, Mr Smith said.

Walk On was designed to be single use and, after being used, could be buried and would disappear in 10 months. His flatmates were using them in the vegetable garden and he reckoned they boasted the best lettuces around.

The business had several directors and several mentors but everything it did was contracted out.

Asked the potential of Walk On, Mr Smith said “she’s going to go big”. “My main aim is to support local and be able to pay farmers more for their wool so they can set about making things more sustainable. It’s only going to get more fun, I suppose,” he said.



**'Money talks ... but all mine ever
says is good-bye.'**

Shearwell New Zealand Ltd

The best-selling RFID sheep tag in Britain and Canada, known as the SET tag, is now available in New Zealand.

Shearwell New Zealand supplies direct to farmers and offers livestock tags, EID readers, software, weigh crates and drafters.

The one-piece sheep tag has a wrap-around design that’s light enough to be inserted into new-born lambs and strong enough to last for life. It was designed to give the best possible retention. The latest trial work in Canada shows 99% retention in 50,000 tags over a 3-year period. With these exceptional retention rates, SET tags are gaining popularity in Australia, Brazil, USA, Canada and now New Zealand.

Shearwell’s revolutionary tag design allows this lifetime tag to be used as both a visual identification tag and a low-cost method of electronically identifying sheep. The tags can be applied to sheep at any age, and are also suitable for identification of other species. They are available in 11 colours (yellow, green, white, orange, grey, blue, purple, pink, black, red and brown).

Another useful tool is the Shearwell Stick Reader which has been developed for speed of use and accuracy. One of its helpful features are the green and red lights, green to show the animal is being read for the first time and red if it has already been scanned which is a real plus when pen reading.

This is the ultimate farmer-friendly tool – simple to use, rugged and versatile. It reads all types of EID ear tags and boluses, and can hold up to 16,000 records! It links by Bluetooth to mobile printers and weigh-heads. Another unique feature is the ability to interface with both android and iOS apps, which means it will greatly assist farmers to meet their NAIT requirements.

The Shearwell Weigh Crate or Automatic Drafter takes the pain out of handling large groups of sheep. The race reader and digital weigh-head are linked to a handheld stock recorder so data collection is easy, fast and accurate.

Knowing the pressures on costs, Shearwell is committed to bringing value for money to the marketplace. Talk to us about the best solution for your farm.



For more information go to www.shearwell.co.nz or call 0800 79 99 89.

MERINO AT HEART OF FIRM'S SPECIAL TEXTILES

By **Sally Rae**

Photo: **Sally Rae**

Otago Daily Times Monday, 19 December 2016

Reprinted with permission

Global Merino truly lives up to its name.

In August, the company's founder and chief executive Jose Fernandez and his family moved from the United States to Spain.

The company itself remains based in California, there is an office in Bangkok, its technical director is in Melbourne and much of its merino wool is sourced from New Zealand.

Global Merino is a technical textile manufacturer, founded by Mr Fernandez in 2007, which uses merino wool as a primary ingredient and in a variety of ways.

Some of its textiles were 100% wool, others were blended and some were unique constructions. Customers included giant outdoor brands such as Patagonia, along with sports specialist brands catering for the likes of cyclists, skiers and runners.

Mr Fernandez had been in New Zealand recently and his visit included meeting growers at a gathering at Glenbrook Station, between Omarama and Twizel, where he outlined his business.

PGG Wrightson Wool business development manager Craig Smith said it was an opportunity for merino growers to interact with the end user of their wool.

They could find out where their wool had gone and in what products and brands it had been used.

Global Merino was an "exceptional" technical fabric maker and Mr Fernandez was extremely passionate about the wool he needed, Mr Smith said.

Three years ago, Global Merino sourced 20 tonnes of wool top from New Zealand and that had grown to more than 200 tonnes so growth had been "very, very quick", he said.

"One of the things I like about this programme, we've found a person that appreciates the wool that you're growing," Mr Smith told growers.

One reason for Mr Fernandez's shift to Spain was to grow Global Merino's business which was skewed at 90% North American and 10% European. Mr Fernandez hoped to balance that out, which meant doubling the business in the next five years.



Global Merino chief executive Jose Fernandez with a range of product. Photo: Sally Rae.

At the same time, he thought it would be a good experience for his children and, while they were initially "shell-shocked" at being dropped into a different culture, they were now embracing the experience.

Mr Fernandez grew up in upstate New York and studied economics and sociology at university. His career started in retail and moved into product manufacturing. He first ended up in New Zealand about 20 years ago, doing business with tanneries in the South Island. His work eventually evolved into taking the opportunity to start his own business. In simplistic terms, it was "product marketing and product development 101", he said.

It was about figuring out market opportunities and what customer need was and determining how to meet the need and then do that. It was not a complex formula, he said.

Global Merino looked at what a runner or a cyclist or a skier needed — and their requirements were all different — and then examined the technical properties of merino and how to apply them to those needs.

There were athletes among the staff members and Mr Fernandez himself was a keen cyclist and skier.

Technology in textiles and synthetics was always evolving. Global Merino's challenge was to continue to service its customers as it expanded the business, making sure it continued to come up with new ways to add value to merino, he said.

"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."

The consistent message from customers was "we see things from you we don't see elsewhere" and that helped Global Merino better position itself against the rest of the market.

There was a general trend towards natural fibre. He believed consumers, particularly young people, were looking for solutions that affected the environment less.


"It's a bit more thoughtful approach to product evaluation. People just want to be a little bit more aware of the impact they are having," he said.

This year, Global Merino contracted 210 tonnes from New Zealand, 50 tonnes from Australia through contracts and another 100 to 120 tonnes were bought at auction.

Also this year, the company made a commitment to move away from commodity wool. It was the first textile manufacturer to commit 100% to direct-sourced wool, so that 100 to 120 tonnes would now have to be obtained that way.


Mr Fernandez enjoyed catching up with growers, saying some had become very good friends.

As for future plans — "besides taking over the world", he quipped — it was about continuing to be a resource for differentiation, he said.



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Photo: The Muster (Australia)

Adelaide Royal Show September 2016

The grand champion March shorn Merino or Poll Merino ram from the Daniell family's White River stud, Poochera, SA & held by stud groom, Alli Brands, with the models from the wool fashion parade that was part of the Wool Fashion Parade held as part of the social evening.



Photo: The Muster (Australia)

Tom Ashby, North Ashrose stud, Gulnare, SA holding his Supreme Merino or Poll Merino exhibit with all the judges.

A big thank you to Ian Turner, editor of "The Muster" for permission to use these photos.

"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."

PITT ISLAND SHEEP

A Rare Breed of New Zealand Origin



'In the nineteen-seventies a feral flock of several thousand sheep could be found on Pitt Island in the Chatham group

These possibly derived from Saxony Merinos first taken to South-East Island – another island in the Chatham group – in 1841 and later transferred to Pitt Island. In any case, the flock is known with certainty to have been in existence for almost a century.

A Reserve for 300 of these animals was created on Pitt Island in 1981. A number have also been taken to mainland New Zealand.'

NB: *Above taken from the Rare Breeds Conservation Society of NZ website, set up by Michael Trotter*

The Survivor Breed

Pitt Island sheep are almost all coloured and have the self-shedding fleeces characteristic of feral breeds. The rams are impressively horned – up to a metre long measured around the curve.

In a study made of the sheep on the Reserve in 1981, Dr M. R. Rudge found that only 11.1% of rams and 8.8% of ewes were white; 97% of rams were horned but only 13% of the ewes had true horns, though 54% of the ewes had scurs.

Of the ones on the mainland "Avonstour" has a small flock and we have bred them for 20 odd years.

The wool we shear is for spinning, weaving and felting and sold direct to the hand crafter. The wool is coarser and drier than pure Merino. Some have hairy britches. The staple is also not blocky like pure Merino. This

may well be due to isolated inbreeding or maybe the original sheep were crossbred. But as they have been on the Island since 1841 they are a pure breedthe Survivor Breed - Pitt Island Sheep.

The meat of these sheep makes great eating and that alone makes them worth breeding for fresh house meat. I have also made sheep hams and sheep bacon from large wethers and fat older ewes with great success, the meat taking the cure and smoke well.

As we run the rams all the time with the ewes, singles are very common, as the ewes take on the first cycle. They will breed out of season as do most Merino stock. The rams are very vigorous and will always find a ewe on heat even if they have to jump a boundary fence and go next door. All the fences here are 9 wire, 1.2m high fully battened and tight. A baggy cow fence will not hold them. Sheep netting is unsuitable as the horned ewes will get trapped in netting.

This breed is truly a survivor and will live where other sheep just die living on a very rough diet. They are very resistant and tolerant to parasites but will be hit with Facial Eczema (FE) as it is unknown on Pitt Island.

I have never had one fly struck, but we shear before the fly season is here as we live in a fly area, it being hot and humid.

This is a long lived breed as we have had ewes breed for 10 years, some up to 15 years old. This breed's teeth hold well and on good country will appear to be slightly overshot due to long teeth that need to work for a living and not live on lush feed.

The feet are good and even in wet soft Taranaki we rarely see one limp.

The rams are wanted for Safari hunting parks and are often marketed as "Arapawa", which is a shame as this is a totally different breed, but more well known on the world hunting scene. As well as good trophy horns, the horns can be used for stick work and make great shepherds' crooks. I have also used them for door handles.

A great breed and I am glad breeders are keeping them going.

Reference:

Rudge, M. R., 1983. "A reserve for feral sheep on Pitt Island, Chatham group, New Zealand", *New Zealand Journal of Zoology*. Volume 10, pages 349-364.

PGG Wrightson Livestock

NEW DAIRY SHEEP BREED TO HAVE FIRST AUCTION OF GENETICALLY EVALUATED BREEDING STOCK

Contributed by Professor Roger Morris

In 2016 the DairyMeade milking sheep breed was recognized by the New Zealand Sheep Breeders' Association as the first dairy sheep breed developed in New Zealand. This was the culmination of twenty years breeding effort by Miles and Janet King, of Kingsmeade Artisan Cheese Company in Masterton. Considering the high current level of interest in establishment of milking sheep flocks both in New Zealand and overseas, the foresight shown by the Kings in methodically developing a dairy sheep specifically suited to New Zealand conditions and selected for superior productivity in both milk yield and lambing percentage has proved very beneficial to the growth of the industry.



Over 5,000 sheep are recorded in the breed database, which has pedigrees of all animals in the breeding program back to 1996, when the flock was established.

The flock was initially established using East Friesian semen and Coopworth and Border Leicester ewes selected as having characteristics suited to machine milking and high productivity. Subsequently the only introductions have been of East Friesian blood lines. Throughout the 20 years there has been active selection on productivity and suitability for milking.

In recent years the flock has moved progressively to direct measurement of production traits and dairy suitability, in addition to earlier scoring of conformation and productive ability. It now has a growing number of daughter flocks, which will expand the number of animals being recorded. It is also exporting embryos and semen to milking sheep flocks in Asia and Australia to enhance flocks in other countries.

All animals currently in the flock have been evaluated for genetic merit by Professor of Animal Genetics at Massey University, Nicolas Lopez-Villalobos, to provide individual maternal breeding values, which predict the ability of ewes to produce milk and have high lambing percentages, as well as their suitability for use in dairy production. For rams, it predicts their ability to produce progeny with these characteristics. Details of the breeding program are to be presented at the New Zealand Society of Animal Production conference in June 2017. Animals are selected on yield and composition of milk, lambs born, weaning weight of lambs, body weight of ewes, conformation and suitability for machine milking.

On March 15 a first auction of over sixty young breeding rams and ewes from the Kingsmeade flock will be held at Clareville Showgrounds in Carterton by the newly established company, DairyMeade Genetics NZ Ltd. This provides an outstanding opportunity for others to start in the industry, using genetically evaluated animals. A growing number of daughter flocks are expanding the number of DairyMeade sheep which will contribute to future genetic improvement and numbers of animals available for sale.

Each animal in the auction will have its breeding value (as calculated through the Massey genetic software) available to potential bidders.



A DairyMeade ram

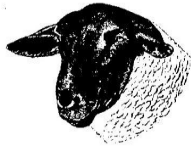
Bids can be submitted through the DairyMeade Genetics web site www.dairymeade.co.nz as well as in person at the auction. Two Massey Professors, Roger Morris and Nicolas Lopez-Villalobos will be at the auction, where they will explain the development of the breed and answer questions.

DairyMeade Sheep Auction

Wednesday 15th of March
Wairarapa A & P Society Showgrounds
Chester Road (just north of Carterton),
Carterton

Bids can be submitted through the DairyMeade Genetics web site www.dairymeade.co.nz as well as in person at the auction.

"Fostering the improvement of all sheep breeds and providing a unified body whose collective voice has a beneficial effect on the total New Zealand sheep industry."



LIFE MEMBERSHIP SUFFOLK NZ JOHN MILES (JT). COLEFORD STUD, Flock #406



It is with pleasure that I write a short tribute to the life time of effort that the man we all know as JT, (John Miles) has put into the breeding of Suffolk Sheep in New Zealand.

Last November, JT received a lifetime membership and medal from Suffolk NZ, which appeared to come as quite a surprise to him. It however came as no surprise to his fellow members who have witnessed his efforts in improving the Suffolk breed and his infectious passion for showing.

JT's adventure into the Stud Sheep world started in the 1960s with Southdown's, by the mid-seventies the breed was becoming smaller and JT could see that the trend of the meat industry was changing to a larger carcass. The need for a rangier breed of sheep was obvious, so in 1977 the Coleford Suffolk Flock (no. 406) was founded. The first year Coleford Stud purchased 41 ewes and this number has now grown to nearly 200 ewes. Today Coleford can be found in the pedigrees of nearly every Suffolk Stud in New Zealand, many in Australia and Globally.

JT's Suffolk bloodlines have won many prestigious awards in the show ring. He is very proud of all the achievements of his sheep and their progeny but of all his showing success with Suffolk's three occasions come to mind...

The first... He was asked to send a ram to the World Sheep Congress in Brazil, this ram was entered in a class of 37 International entries and his Coleford ram came 9th.

The second... was when a ram he exported to Australia sired the Overall Supreme Champion Sheep of Perth Show, a title held by the Merino breed for decades.

The third... was when a ram he had bred, Coleford 600/11 won Supreme Champion Animal of Christchurch Show.

It has taken him many years of work, with many a delight, from the achievements along the way, "Winning your first, First place", "Winning your first Champion", balanced by "many disappointments" to get where he has got today.... The breeder of top quality sheep who without a doubt breed exactly what the purchaser, the industry & the consumer want. Many Thanks JT from The Suffolk Breeders of NZ & myself, for all your years of dedication to the Suffolk Breed & many years of wisdom, you like to quietly share.

Penni Loffhagen

JT MILES

John, we would like to congratulate you on receiving life membership. You should be very proud of the influence your Coleford bloodlines have had on improving the Australian Suffolk flock.

Personally, we are lucky enough to call you our friend and mentor. Your guidance and generosity over the years means a great deal to us.

Best Wishes always,

*Pam & Bouch,
Pamellen Suffolk Stud,
Western Australia*

JT MILES

Congratulations to John Miles (aka. JT & Johnny Kilometre) for his well earned Life Membership. John apart from being well known for his great sheep... is also well known for his great handshake (**bonecrusher** style) when greeting people.

He started breeding Suffolk's about the same time I started my flock, nearly 40 years ago, on his South Canterbury farm. He is a very astute breeder with emphasis on structural soundness, breed points and purebred Suffolk's. He has participated in many local shows with great results. Not only do his sheep do well in shows, but the proof of the pudding is in the way they perform for other breeders in their flocks. His Suffolk's are spread the length of NZ & overseas (mainly OZ). John has judged at many shows in NZ & Australia with great feedback from shows that he has judged. Congratulations JT, Well done you old baaaa...s**d, you deserve it!!

*Colin Irwin,
Woodbine Stud,
Waiuku
NI Breed Committee Rep 1983-1994, 1998-2006*



Photo: "The Muster" magazine (Australia) taken at the September 2016 Adelaide Royal Show
 Sequence stitch of Lily Dalla kissing one of her Uncle's & Grandfather, Orrie Cowie's champion ewes while we were setting up for a photo of all three - Orrie Cowie won champion Merino ewe in all 3 wool categories.

2017 New Zealand Ewe Hogget Competition

This iconic nationwide competition is now in its 21st year and entries are welcomed.

This unique hogget competition gives farmers the opportunity to benchmark their flocks against others at both local and national level as well as giving them the chance to compare different farming systems and learn from other competitors as well as the judging panel. All farmers are invited to enter and **'give it a go', - what better way to assess your progress?**

The Competition thanks our sponsors Alliance Group, MerialAncare, New Zealand Sheepbreeders, Ballance Agri-Nutrients, Beef+Lamb New Zealand, NZ Farmer, and PGG Wrightson Livestock who believe in this grass roots competition.

ENTRIES CLOSE NORTH ISLAND – 10th APRIL, SOUTH ISLAND – 21st APRIL, with judging to follow, and the National Final Judging to take place in the North Island on the 22-24th April, and in the South Island between 1st - 4th May.

"The achievements of New Zealand farmers deserve more recognition and acknowledgement.

The New Zealand Ewe Hogget competition is in its 21st year and continues to grow momentum in promoting excellence within the sheep industry. It is now more important than ever for sheep farmers to have an efficient and profitable business. This competition provides the ideal opportunity for entrants to compete and compare to ensure future success" - Stephen Rabbidge, the National Convenor

For the very first time the Presentation Dinner is taking place on Thursday 8th June in Napier where all Breed Finalists will receive their awards and at the end of the evening the Overall Winner will be announced. Everyone is most welcome to attend this evening. The competition concludes later in the year with a Field Day on the Winners property

"A massive thanks to the many volunteers who believe in this competition, contacting farmers encouraging entries, and giving up their time and effort for the duration of this event"

– Greg Burgess New Zealand Sheepbreeders' Assn.

Looking forward to receiving your entries from all over New Zealand.

The Entry Form is available on the NZSBA website www.nzsba.co.nz or ask for one to be sent to you from NZSBA office if not on line.

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**Our name
stands for
best of
breed.**

**For expertise and
integrity you can
depend on talk to
us today.**



Callum Stewart
National Genetics Manager
Manawatu/Whanganui
027 280 2688



Tom Suttor
Hawke's Bay, East Coast,
Wairarapa
027 446 9967



Callum McDonald
Livestock Genetics Rep
Southland
027 433 6443



Callum Dunnett
Livestock Genetics Rep
Mid/South Canterbury
027 590 8612



Cam Heggie
Livestock Genetics Rep
King Country, Waikato,
Northland, Bay of Plenty
027 501 8182



Graham Sidey
Livestock Genetics Rep
North Canterbury,
Nelson, Marlborough
027 432 1384



John McKone
Livestock Genetics Rep,
Auctioneer
Canterbury
027 229 9375



Roger Keach
Livestock Genetics Rep
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027 432 5766



Bruce Orr
Senior Genetics Advisor
027 592 2121

Freephone 0800 10 22 76 www.pggwrightson.co.nz

Helping grow the country

‘LOOK FOR’ – 2017 Annual Returns will be forwarded to those on email and posted to those who are not, early in March. Please return to the office by **31st May** as late returns hold up the compiling of the Flock Book.

Those who may have two years outstanding, will have their 2017 and 2016 returns forwarded to them.

Please remember to put through any ewe and ram transfers. All transfers to be forwarded straight to the office.

The closing date for next issue of the newsletter will be 1st May for the June 2017 Newsletter. Editor will be out of the country late May & all of June!!!

THE NEXT “FEATURE BREED” WILL BE SHROPSHIRE

If you would like to be part of this section, **photos and stud histories of all breeds are accepted at any time.**

Email or post to the Editor – see front page for address details.

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